

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium comprising:

a data repository; and

~~Executable~~ executable instructions, wherein

[[The]] the data repository includes:

access control rule data including access ~~group~~ control rule entries, an access control rule entry identifying a characteristic method data entry, and

characteristic method data including characteristic method data entries, a characteristic method data entry relating to at least one entry in the access control rule data and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a user and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a data object; and

the executable instructions, when executed by a processor, perform operations comprising:

receiving an indication of a user;

receiving an indication of a data object;

accessing an access control rule data entry identifying a characteristic method data entry;

accessing the characteristic method data entry identified by the access control rule data entry, the characteristic method data entry identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a user and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a data object;

determining the characteristic for the user by performing the method to determine the characteristic for the user identified by the characteristic method data entry;

determining the characteristic for the data object by performing the method to determine the characteristic for the data object identified by the characteristic method data entry; and

generating access control information that permits the user to access the data object conditioned on the characteristic for the user being the same as the characteristic for the data object.

17. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the data repository further includes user data.

18. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 17 wherein at least one entry in the characteristic method data identifies a method to determine a user characteristic associated with at least one entry in the user data.

19. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 18 wherein at least one entry in the access control rule data includes an indication of a criterion for use in eliminating at least one entry in the user data when using the method to determine a user characteristic.

20. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 18 wherein at least one entry in the characteristic method data includes an indication of a criterion for use in eliminating at least one entry in the user data when using the method to determine a user characteristic.

21. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the data repository further includes data object data.

22. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 21 wherein at least one entry in the characteristic method data identifies a method to determine a data object characteristic associated with at least one entry in the data object data.

23. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 21 wherein at least one entry in the characteristic method data includes an indication of a criterion for use in eliminating at least one entry in the data object data when using the method to determine a data object characteristic.

24. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 21 wherein at least one entry in the access control rule data includes an indication of a criterion for use in eliminating at least one entry in the data object data when using the method to determine a data object characteristic.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a data repository; and
executable instructions, wherein
the data repository includes:

access control rule data including access control rule entries, an access control rule entry identifying a characteristic method data entry, and

characteristic method data including characteristic method data entries, a characteristic method data entry relating to at least one entry in the access control rule data and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a user and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a data object; and

the executable instructions, when executed by a processor, perform operations comprising:

receiving an indication of a user;

receiving an indication of a data object;

accessing an access control rule data entry identifying a characteristic method data entry;

accessing the characteristic method data entry identified by the access control rule data entry, the characteristic method data entry identifying a method to determine a

characteristic for a user and identifying a method to determine a characteristic for a data object;

determining the characteristic for the user by performing the method to determine the characteristic for the user identified by the characteristic method data entry;

determining the characteristic for the data object by performing the method to determine the characteristic for the data object identified by the characteristic method data entry; and

generating access control information that permits the user to access the data object conditioned on the characteristic for the user being the same as the characteristic for the data object.

27. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the method to determine the characteristic for the user comprises the method to determine the characteristic for the data object.

28. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the method to determine the characteristic for the user is different than the method to determine the characteristic for the data object.

29. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the access control rule data includes a first access control rule entry identifying a first characteristic method data entry and a second access control rule entry that is different than the first access control rule entry identifying the first characteristic method data entry.

30. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the characteristic method data includes a first characteristic method data entry identifying a first method to determine a characteristic for a user and a second characteristic method data entry identifying a second method to determine a characteristic for a user, the first method being different than the second method.

31. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 16 wherein the characteristic method data includes a first characteristic method data entry identifying a first method to determine a characteristic for a data object and a second characteristic method data entry identifying a second method to determine a characteristic for a data object, the first method being different than the second method.